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Blackwood

An Adventure for 4-6 Players of levels 1 to 3

Created for Imarand, The Twin Worlds Campaign Setting

This adventure refers to several other Pathfinder Roleplaying Game products next to the Core Rulebook using the following abbreviations. These books are not needed to play this adventure as they also can be found for free online at paizo.com/prd.

Advanced Player's Guide	APG	Imarand Campaign Setting	ICS
Advanced Class Guide	ACG	Mythic Adventures	MA
Advanced Race Guide	ARG	NPC Codex	NPC
Bestiary 1	B1	Ultimate Combat	UC
Bestiary 2	B2	Ultimate Equipment	UE
Bestiary 3	B3	Ultimate Magic	UM
Bestiary 4	B4	Technology Guide	TG

Blackwood

Backstory

The Blackwood family is a wealthy and powerful noble family within the kingdom of Whitemere. Lord Blackwood rules the family with an iron fist, from his manor deep within the Queen's Rest. Lately Lord Blackwood has fallen sick and he desperately clinging on to what little life he has left, cursing everybody else and terrorizing family and friend alike. Rumors said he has let in some dark figures to extend his life.

Queen's Rest

The players are received in a grand guild hall of the local jeweler's guild, by a noble of the Durnmorn Adventuring Guild named, Lady Stormglen.

"This time the guild wants you to go on a diplomatic mission, to Blackwood Mansion that lies deep within Queen's rest, a forest north of the city. As you might already know the forest is an ancient elven burial place."

- *Knowledge (Local) (DC 12) Lord Blackwood and his extensive family hold the deeds to the Queen Rest, and any burial needs to take place with the consent of the Blackwoods.*
- *Knowledge (Religion), (History) (DC 14), (Nobility) (DC 16) it is said that each tree is a grave, a ritual preserved throughout time till this day.*
- *Knowledge (Religion) or (History) (DC 14) those of noble blood who are not buried with the wood are often seen as common noble, just barely above the common rabble.*
- *Knowledge (Geography) (DC 16) Blackwood Mansion lies deep within the woods, while the forest edge only lies as couple of hours travel for the city.*
- *Knowledge (Nature) (DC 18) although the wood are safe, there are often reports of Ankhegs and Giant Spiders in the woods.*

"We have been trying to get the support of a local lord and his family in our campaign against the cult. His wealth and influence could help us greatly. Go there, BEHAVE, and win the support of Lord Blackwood. If you manage to secure his or the support of his family, we will reward you 1000 GP, each."

- *Diplomacy (DC 15) Lord Blackwood has requested to send a group adventurers to test the skills of the guild before lending his support.*
- *Knowledge (Local) (DC 22) Lord Blackwood, is often pictured as a man who rules over his family with an iron fist, and has a tendency to play cruel games with his guests.*

"I will give you a map to navigate the woods, as well as mounts to make your travels easier. Although the woods are deemed safe, be on your guard: people still disappear. Also Lord Blackwood is a crafty old geezer, watch his words, he has a cruel streak if you displease him."

It takes the party only half a day to reach the edge of the wood, but the Blackwood Mansion is still another day of traveling through the woods.



- *Survival (DC 12) or Knowledge (Geography) (DC 14) to navigate the woods.*

If the players fail 3 checks they need to spend another day in the woods, with a 25% chance to an extra encounter. (Use Encounter I or II).

While navigating the forest path the players will be ambushed, the road covered with webbing and the player will be forced to dismount and hack their way through the webbing filled with tiny spiders.

- *Perception (DC 18)* for the players to noticed the 2 giant spiders laying in ambush.

Encounter I

2x Giant Spiders	800 XP	B1	p. 258
1x Spider Swarm	400 XP	B1	p. 258

When the players finally reach the Blackwood Mansion in Queen's Rest. They view upon grim site, the place looks like a cemetery except without any graves. The Mansion is actually a village in its own right. In the center lies the Blackwood Mansion. There is also a small church of Demari, some small shrines, a chapel, a small wooden keep, stables, servant's quarters, and guest houses. It even has a resident blacksmith and apothecary. The entire village is surrounded by a low wall and gothic cold iron fences.

A low mausoleum with a weatherworn crest, standing just outside the village seems a bit out of place but is well tended by the groundskeepers.

The party is greeted by a servant, an older lady named Madam Sophie of the Blackwood household. The servant asks what brought the players here: a burial, visiting a grave or just paying their respects. If the players state they want to speak to Lord Blackwood, she looks a bit frightened.

In the meanwhile three rangers prepare for a trip into the forest.

- *Perception (DC 14)* they keep an eye on the players as they are being received by the household servants, looking on them with suspicion.

"The Master isn't feeling that well lately. Do you have urgent matters to discuss with him?"

Allow the player to respond on this, if they push it a meeting can be arranged the same day.

- *Diplomacy / Intimidate (DC 18), for a meeting on the same day.*

"I see..., I'll inform the master of you presence. Karl, Maya, please see to our guests."

If the players don't persuade Sophie, they will be placed in one of the guest houses and asked to wait until Lord Blackwood will see them.

Blackwood Mansion

Lord Blackwood is a fragile old man with a ghoulish look and watery beady eyes. His room is cold, dark and depressing. Lord Blackwood is looking out the windows as the players enter the room.

"So you wish to gain the favor of Old Lord Blackwood for your little crusade. I couldn't care less about the cult and your pathetic little guild, other than that it amuses me."

*"I already know your guild is after my wealth and influence, so I'll make you a deal: do something useful around here in exchange for my support. Gehehehehe *cough* *cough* *wheeze* The Wardens, my filthy groundskeepers, have been bothering me for weeks about needing more help. Guess what. You're the help. Speak with Agnar Wildblooded. You can find him in that hovel of theirs."*

"And do report back to me if you find anything interesting, I like to keep informed what is going on in this fair forest."

Lord Blackwood answers a few questions the player might have but will never go into any detail. He simple doesn't care about the players ramblings and soon grows tired of the players.

*"I got your writ right here. Do some good, bug a warden and get back to me when you're done." He signs a paper on his desk. On their way out Lord Blackwood yell at the players. "Oh do bring me back some fairy dust, if you see a pixy, don't forget. Bwahahahahaha *cough* *cough*"*

The Wardens

The rangers are gone when the players have spoken with Lord Blackwood or if they enter the mansion if they are asked to wait. The players might notice Lord Blackwood watching them enter the Warden Hold.

- *Perception (DC 18), See Lord Blackwood watching them enter the Warden Hold. He quickly walks away from the window when he notices the players are watching him as well.*

The Warden Hold is a cozy place. It seems to serve as some kind of ale house and place to rest for those who live in the village as well as the ranger's barracks.

Agnar Wildblooded, a large Half-Orc Hunter, is sitting behind a desk filling in and working with all kinds of papers. On the ground next to him is a large wolf, gnawing on a large bone.

- Knowledge (Nature) (DC 15), to identify the wolf as a feral dire wolf.

Agnar looks up for his paper work silently studying the players, before continuing his paperwork. Without looking up he says. *"So you are the 'help' Lord Blackwood sends me. It is still a joke to him, I see. *sigh*. That man could get us all killed, but at least you are here. We are not the glorified groundskeepers Lord Blackwood wants you to believe we are. We keep these woods safe and keep the dead in their graves. Although he thinks us useless, we have been here long enough that Lord Blackwood can just kick us out, yet."*

"You have probably heard nothing from him, so let's start at the beginning. I'm Agnar, head of the Wardens. In the last week I have lost 3 wardens, either due to a spider infestation in the south, nasty ankhegs or some dead that won't say dead."

"I like you to go out on patrol and look for any leads what causing these disturbances. Oh, and if you kill any spider you find, I will pay 25 gp for each confirmed kill."

A patrol take multiple days and each day the players may return to the hold of guest house if they choose to. If the players head out and patrol the forest, they come upon a clearing in the woods. The ground suddenly trembles and a large bug-like beast attacks from the ground below.

Encounter II:

1x Ankheg 800 XP B1 p. 15

Later on the players encounter a wandering Ettercap with 2 large spiders, hunting for food in the wood. The Ettercap is carrying a cocoon that is trashing about.

The players can avoid this encounter by rolling one of the checks below. If the players attack the Ettercap runs away as soon as his spiders are killed, hoping to lead the players in a couple of traps he had set earlier. (The Ettercap statblok for the traps.)

- *Stealth or Survival (DC 15) to quickly hide in the environment and escape detection.*
- *Knowledge (Nature) (DC 12) to identify any weakness.*
- *Disguise or Bluff (DC 18) to avoid detection to pass off as wildlife that flees.*
- *Perception (DC 12) to notice the cocoon contains a humanoid creature calling for help.*

In the cocoon is one of the rangers the players saw earlier at the Warden Hold. He thanks the players for their help and makes his way back on his own. (Award 200 gp extra, given by Agnar).

At this point Agnar become interested in the players, and their actions, and might be persuaded into helping the Adventuring guild.

(Optional) Encounter III:

1x Ettercap	800 XP	B1	p. 129
2x Giant Spider	400 XP	B1	p. 258

During their last patrol the players reach a mass grave, seething with black tendrils and necromantic energy. There is nothing the player can do about the grave other than cover it up (if the players have the tools, e.q. spades or shovels). What is interesting about the grave is that the bodies seem “fresh” and a large black crystal is placed in the middle of the grave.



- Heal (DC 16) the bodies in the grave haven’t been dead that long, some might be dead for a couple of weeks, other just a few days old.
- Knowledge (History) or (Religion) (DC 16) there have been no battles fought in these parts, neither has a mass grave ever been used as a type of burial in these woods.
- Knowledge (Local) (DC 14) the use of mass graves is locally frowned upon in this kingdom, even if mass graves are found they are often dug up and the bodies are either cremated or placed in their own graves.
- Spellcraft (DC 19) the area is placed under a powerful necromantic ritual, capable of animating the dead.

If the players wander around the grave some of the bodies start to move, rising as either ghouls or zombies. The ghouls and zombies keep coming each round (roll on the table below 1d4, until the players retreat.

(Optional) Encounter IV:

Dice Roll	Result			
1	Nothing			
2	1x Ghoul	400 XP	B1	p. 146
3	2x Fast Zombies	200 XP	B1	p. 288
4	3x Fast Zombies	200 XP	B1	p. 288

The Return

If the players return, Lord Blackwood dismisses the tale of the mass grave as superstition and figments of their imaginations.

*"You have been hanging out with those Warden for too long. Maybe it's time to head back. Tell your little guild that they have my support. Take this writ, I'll even throw in a little bonus for your troubles; let's say 250 GP each. *cough* *cough* Now be gone, your presence makes me sick."*

From Agnar at the Wardens Hold the players receives a warm welcome, especially if they managed to save the Ranger. As soon as he hears the news about the grave he curses and starts grabbing some gear.

"No time to lose! We need to seal that place up. You get me some holy water from the temple, tell them I sent you. I'll see you out at the gate in 10 minutes."

At the temple, the priest hastily gathers 10 flasks of holy water, looking alarmed that Agnar has made the request. Each player is given one flask, the others are used in the ritual.

As the players lead Agnar to the grave, he explains his plan: "There is an ancient Warden ritual that keeps the dead in their graves. This ritual will seal up any spawning place for undead.

The players need to either help Agnar or defend him while he performs the ritual. At least one player needs to help and one needs to defend before he can begin.

If all participants are interrupted the ritual fails, but the ritual won't fail if Agnar is interrupted as long one participant is still focused on the ritual and chanting. Those who help with the ritual are given extra flasks of holy water.

As the players come back to the scene of the grave, they see that the grave is unearthed once again (if the filled it up). Otherwise 1d3 zombies or ghouls have appeared. **(See Encounter IV)**

- If a player casting the ritual is hit he or she must make a concentration check DC 10 + damage taken to keep their focus. If a caster loses their focus he needs to take a full round action to re-attune to the ritual and use a flask of holy water by pouring it around him.
- As a swift action a caster can step out of the ritual and perform any other action, but must re-attune if he wants to participate in the ritual again. Any player participating in the ritual isn't considered flat-footed while casting the ritual.
- Defenders have the task of taking out any hostiles and keep the casters safe.
- Each round zombies or ghouls appear attacking the nearest living creature (See encounter IV).
- Duration of the ritual is 10 rounds.

When the ritual is complete the earth swallows up the mass grave, sealing it completely, and the necromantic energies dissipate as well the black tendrils.

If the party fails they need to restart the ritual, the ritual can be started again with 2 casters and 2 flasks of holy water. If they run out the need to make more flasks or retreat back to the village to get more.

Conclusion

When the players return to town after closing the mass grave, they find that Lord Blackwood is no longer there.

- **Evil** (-5) : Players take Lord Blackwood offer and leave.
- **Good** (+5) : Players rescue the captured ranger from the ettercap.
- **Lawful** (+5) : Players have Lord Blackwood writ to support the Durnmorn Adventuring Guild.
- **Chaos** (-5) : Players steal the writ from Lord Blackwood, if Lord Blackwood hasn't fled the mission is a failure and increase the shift to chaos with 5 to -10.

If Angar learns Lord Blackwood has fled, he forces himself into the mansion. A small investigation by the players can be done and will lead to Lord Blackwood involvement with the appearance of the mass grave.

- Perception (DC 22) to notice a hidden compartment in his desk, contain various notes and letters with a necromancer Nocla Carsil the Unholy.
- Diplomacy / Intimidate (DC 14) some of the maids have seen him ride off into the woods, a couple of hour ago, but in his state he couldn't have gotten far.
- Heal (DC 15) the state of Lord Blackwood doesn't make him fit too travel, and he need to rest often during his escape.
- Survival (DC 12), a couple of horse tracks lead out of town, into the forest toward the north-west.

If the player pursue him, with Agnar in tow if they did their investigation, they catch Lord Blackwood a half day travel outside his mansion, resting against a tree coughing and wheezing. His squire is taking a leak behind a bush.

- Perception (DC 17) to notice the squire.

Lord Blackwood will fight with an uncanny grace, and rather than facing justice he will fight to the death. His squire drops his weapon and surrenders as soon as he has 6 hit points left, and flees at 3 hit points but will not help attacking his Lord.

Encounter V:

Enforcer (Lord Blackwood)^(NPC)
Squire^(NPC)

Lord Blackwood uses a Mwk. longsword instead of a Mwk. club, mwk longsword +7
(1d8+6/19-20)

Whether the players kill Lord Blackwood or not, Agnar is grateful for their help and offers his help with any cause or troubles the player might have.

- Diplomacy (DC 14) will give the players a writ for Agnar, aiding the guild with divine support fighting undeads.

Treasure Handouts



Scroll of Cure Moderate Wounds (150gp)

Use Magic Device DC 22

When laying your hand upon a living creature, you channel positive energy that cures 2d8 points of damage + 1 point per caster level (maximum +5). Since undead are powered by negative energy, this spell deals damage to them instead of curing their wounds. An undead creature can apply spell resistance, and can attempt a Will save to take half damage.



Wand of Burning Hands (CL 5th, 9 charges) (675gp)

Use Magic Device DC 20

A cone of searing flame shoots from your fingertips. Any creature in the area of the flames takes 1d4 points of fire damage per caster level (maximum 5d4). Flammable materials burn if the flames touch them. A character can extinguish burning items as a full-round action.



Alchemist's Fire (50 gp)

You can throw a flask of alchemist's fire as a splash weapon. Treat this attack as a ranged touch attack with a range increment of 10 feet.

A direct hit deals 1d6 points of fire damage. Every creature within 5 feet of the point where the flask hits takes 1 point of fire damage from the splash. On the round following a direct hit, the target takes an additional 1d6 points of damage. If desired, the target can use a full-round action to attempt to extinguish the flames before taking this additional damage. Extinguishing the flames requires a DC 15 Reflex save. Rolling on the ground provides the target a +2 bonus on the save. Leaping into a lake or magically extinguishing the flames automatically smothers the fire.



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Tanglefoot Bag (50 gp)

A tanglefoot bag is a small sack filled with tar, resin, and other sticky substances. When you throw a tanglefoot bag at a creature (as a ranged touch attack with a range increment of 10 feet), the bag comes apart and goo bursts out, entangling the target and then becoming tough and resilient

upon exposure to air. An entangled creature takes a –2 penalty on attack rolls and a –4 penalty to Dexterity and must make a DC 15 Reflex save or be glued to the floor, unable to move. Even on a successful save, it can move only at half speed. Huge or larger creatures are unaffected by a tanglefoot bag. A flying creature is not stuck to the floor, but it must make a DC 15 Reflex save or be unable to fly (assuming it uses its wings to fly) and fall to the ground. A tanglefoot bag does not function underwater.

A creature that is glued to the floor (or unable to fly) can break free by making a DC 17 Strength check or by dealing 15 points of damage to the goo with a slashing weapon. A creature trying to scrape goo off itself, or another creature assisting, does not need to make an attack roll; hitting the goo is automatic, after which the creature that hit makes a damage roll to see how much of the goo was scraped off. Once free, the creature can move (including flying) at half speed. If the entangled creature attempts to cast a spell, it must make concentration check with a DC of 15 + the spell's level or be unable to cast the spell. The goo becomes brittle and fragile after 2d4 rounds, cracking apart and losing its effectiveness. An application of universal solvent to a stuck creature dissolves the alchemical goo immediately.

Maps

Blackwood Manor

Blackwood Manor or Blackwood Village as it's locally know.

